

June 17, 2010

WASHINGTON, D.C. –U.S. Congressman Charlie Melancon (LA-03) today released the following statement after Texas Congressman Joe Barton apologized to BP CEO Tony Hayward during a House hearing on BP's role in the Gulf oil disaster.

**“Joe Barton’s apology to BP is offensive to the thousands of Louisianians whose entire future has been jeopardized by the oil disaster,”** said Congressman Melancon. **“From fishermen to shrimpers to oil and gas workers, BP’s irresponsibility has put the livelihoods of thousands at risk.**

**“I make no apologies for holding BP 100 percent accountable for their negligence. If Joe Barton wants to apologize to someone, I suggest he apologize to the people of Louisiana for his insensitive comments.”**

Barton, the ranking member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, told BP's CEO Tony Hayward that he was “ashamed” at the White House's demand for BP to set aside \$20 billion into an escrow account from which a third party would pay out claims to people hurt by BP's oil spill.

Yesterday, Congressman Melancon sent Hayward a [letter](#) calling on the company to pay the full salary of every oil and gas industry worker who has been laid off due to the moratorium on drilling in the Gulf. The offshore energy industry is a major economic engine for south Louisiana, providing thousands of jobs and supporting numerous locally-based service companies in Congressman Melancon's Congressional district. Experts estimate the direct wages lost during the offshore shutdown may be as high as \$330 million per month.

Congressman Melancon has been leading efforts in Louisiana to coordinate the private, federal, state, and local response to the oil leak caused by the explosion on the Deepwater Horizon oil platform on April 20th. He represents in Congress the areas of coastal Louisiana most directly affected by the oil leak, including Plaquemines, St. Bernard, Terrebonne, Lafourche and southern Jefferson Parishes. The Deepwater Horizon platform was located 50 miles off the coast of Louisiana's Third Congressional District.

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